

Patricia Pruitt

Drawing Point



Alyscamps Press

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ALYSCAMPS PRESS books are published in Paris for Karl Orend.

The publisher dedicates this edition to our dearest friends in Taos and San Cristobal: Tom Creegan, Patricia Berry, Eric & Sia Salmen Vom Dorp, Paul and Tizia O'Connor.

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Frontispiece: Taos Gorge in snow, courtesy of Rivers & Birds.

Front cover: Ernest L. Blumenschein Rio Grande Gorge at Taos.

Internal illustration: Ernest L. Blumenschein Untitled Study with Indians.

Back cover: Gustave Baumann Ranchos de Taos (1919).

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Drawing Point is dedicated in memoriam to Henry Saurwein, former Director of the Artists-in-Residence Program at the Wurlitzer Foundation in Taos, New Mexico, where this poem was written; and to Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno, my wonderful husband; and to Karl Orend, for calling up this poem which he remembered from a reading at l'Atelier Bleu, at 24 rue du Roi de Sicilie in Paris, on November 23rd 1991.



A Note to the Reader

Drawing Point can be read in two ways: Each line may be read horizontally from beginning to end, from page 1 to 28; a second reading can be done in the usual manner, vertically page by page. Line seven only continues until page six.

Drawing Point

Penetration begins with a point at some recognition, hovers bee-wise drawing and
Down on my knees writing on wood — derivative of tree may be oak under me and dust and the unyielding point,
Set of phenomena including us and everyone else what a sweet way to stroke away an afternoon seedlings not
First morning magpies' squabbles for that's what they are and the false objects of desire noted and virile

the outcome to minute particulars. Autopsy Auto-optic. The top will be browned and underneath a white semi-circle
where indulgence is concerned, work is its most demanding. Laying down stepping stones through the gorge
unrestrained without dishonor. No life lived solely — in mind — brain is body is a massive penetration

drawn to a point. All colors are one in black none in white, richness and lack illuminate
every letter an obstacle to be overcome each time. Blind. Too blind. In both eyes or just one. This is the hardest
rain falling on roof. She put out her hand into which the coin. Then said, "God bless you, Miss" lingered
as horse haunches easing down an incline and into Church of San Francisco, the plain cross graphic with blood

will that contrast be the drawing point. Every day here I am as now in sun or terrified and small
an enterprise of epic uncertainties, like connecting the points between stars to see Orion's belt. This getting
inter and intra and all manner of weaving goes on. The breeze at the seventh hour has tendrils for fingers

each. The poet I love will never know though the vine of his beauty surrounds my
deed ever done. To get to it explode it break open resistance — is it black so full of colors or white and
on bless — How have we failed ourselves? What am I to do seeing her thus reduced.
People come to see the “Mystery Painting” rumored to be an El Greco and two pueblos almost fought over another

And this is the field — impenetrable soundless need — on my foot an itch gives a word lost to mind for 3 weeks
somewhere is a trick, or is it. What answer eliminates all questions and allows you to go on thinking, momentarily
the unexpected spill washes out the ^{end}_{ink} while walking the wool to soften it, Scottish

dream What matters more than a bird bumps into the windowpane this morning and flies
empty The birds were quarreling, one flew off, hit my window and flew off again. Only heard the bang saw no bird
how have we allowed this to happen Aspen drying gold on the piano, asters falling. For the duration
and she won't come back to complete the folly, misbegotten idea. all urge gone. The other, the father, was real

Tsamadou — the King and Queen of Tsamadou — we were their loyal and admiring subjects. Tsamadou, rock strewn
mariposa mind fluttering out to light on this and that Most notable mariposa amarilla
out of the long ago Celtic was made and the walkers sing as they go, standing

off does the thrust of buttocks create love of verbs. Crawling along the line of a poem
The quarrel ended with a thud. If I go out now and return I bring a new word into the line or will the line
no alteration of light and dark — perpetual twilight. What does the blood say black in the veins. Pictures of
Woman holding Christ and him too large, a grown man, for her lap. When the angel appeared she was reading. In

bower of blue and leisurely jellyfish and not unlike those of the fevered poet in her Notes,
not alone in a field of mown hay, ^{bailed}_{baled} yesterday. Compact, geometric blocks from myriad random stalks
still, traveling only handful to handful looks easy but it's not. The sun called so

or penis to the point of penetration. If I penetrate him will I verb and adverb more now
be gone? How to rescue anyone's insignificance like bugs from trampling, from screams of fear — we are engaged in
pity are easy to make and to deflect. There is a screen blocking the view from here. Irretrievable break-
the mirror smiles the face of duplicity burnt brown the line drops down same as the river through the gorge

classically fevered. At this point a whistle goes out into the afternoon and why is the word Tsamadou retrieved
and dandelion heads gone to seed, and heat rises at this hour and all green strains to meet and embrace
loudly drives me back in, and the mortal ache of...

And the man next door believes the White smells tastes sweeter than the Black: his very use
retrieval To retrieve the human from unwanted advances, a psychopathic Progress, from blind, stumbling History and his
down of dreams. The first five are faster, then it gets harder. Every three generations you have to kill ‘em all off
there, spotting red now. It will not come about by talking at length. O’Hara to Rivers: “Want a blow job?”

in my foot — arch to be exact. Did I bend to scratch the arch of my foot more than a year ago as I said
lull lost in noon-light return after dark, night is more

even his taste buds carry his dilemma: how to choose between when one is both or neither, yet the choice is frontal repertoire of war, from ignorant Will Are we not lilies ourselves mown down incrementally bent toward light and wind to get anything new, said the wise old man of the Ottoman Empire and so it was done. Forgiveness O get laid somewhere else. How about in that field of purple weeds. Today's gift: the shape of the gorge

for the first time or fifth. As we walked up the hill from Kokkari, did I bend to scratch as I read complex. Standing outside oneself the tell-tale caste marks, intentions obvious as ketchup on a white tee —

every minute unless you leave the inhuman realm passing for life in America. This
beaten Other forces determine and not the hunger for love, but for clarity — though showing cause is not showing
— a necessary action — reported by Henry Sauerwein in a talk entitled Why doesn't anyone speak
and the river (so old) between black soft pumice & red limestone waiting to fall into the split. Circling

the sign — Tsamadou 100 Meters — relieved of itch and uncertainty of where in one gesture. And the way in down
the careful manipulations. A female string of nouns, split being/splayed self. Do you still like...O yes,

edge he lives on threatens to cleave him into inseparable warring parts. And in this posture become a reason. What finally stands to reason is not very much for very long. We crawl forward on a circle at best, Arabic? Startled they fly off in one group, later return one by one. Blue wall succoring jasmine, gestural hawk over electric pole, hot breath on sunburnt breast, the habit of sleep keeps its own clock. Pointing to

a steep root-twisted path. Near the end, light off rocks and sea, bodies softly speaking, a murmur simply lovely, but he was gesturing. She saw it when he said, flower on the tundra. That was his

point ready for penetration, wet and pink. No recognition of the set of adjectives a point presents. Not with words — “well-given,” “well-received.” That’s an aria trees sing at your window, go in and out wall of names. Also gestures introduced to diminish the population but harder on the knees. Small leaps not the rocks where Sufis dance. In the distance dogs in the pound bark — sometimes all night. At a certain

in rhythm with small waves, the lap of voices. Men have returned to hammer with quiet intent, several gesture: she’d had hers. The trouble is evil pollutes and she is afraid at this juncture of the night she feels

Verbs are near. Taste of Black all colors merged in one bound to be deep and pungent. Smell of White empty
not reticent with each other, the opening is open, barriers dismantled, feeling is the water of being, "well-given,"
connectors like the Golden Gate or Brooklyn over bodies of water. We still discern a form even without a name
point the water disappeared, leaving sage for miles, an old shack, with chimney pipe, all gray

at once. Water rolls out of the cleavage. How love comes to them. If they were flowers, blue asters say, butterflies
it though it is weightless and colorless. Night is the harder bank of the river. "I can hardly hear you."

As snow suggests later blue asters. My hands are full hair and flesh all the bodies I've held
the milk-full breast to the child "well-received" There's that excitement of a moon or island peopled
reminiscent of fences, and electrical wires, the tight-rope Does it help to make pictures
with weather. Slipping under the pull. No return to the scene. That damn drip. Major relocation

would light but we've lost that possibility, only the beloved plucks them: No one else walks this way.

"I want to get directions." The golden boy wishes to see the fat woman ride naked on the wooden horse.

filed as warm and soft, or strong, or textured. Adjectives Points peripheral to penetration
by women in pearls and satin — Hollywood babes to be sure — an Abbott and Costello from the 40s or 50s.
This is moving along and Autumn starts, season of leaving and decrease,
of purpose and body. Return to older concerns. Curtains drawn, still dark comes into me every night.

And that takes us half-way. Gesture. Embrace the sun and burn with vision — Semelean vision.
He is prepared to forget about Troy, whereas the guy in the blue pick-up yells, “Git in! Git in!” in the parking lot. White

or central. This point slows down the hand, speeds up the breath, pulls down deeper the gut, and
The possibilities are endless and increasingly fast-paced very down on the floor at times and in these ways a
the appearance of lap-robles. At this point inaction vies with action for space, blank space, Don't
who'll be the first to say uncle. Man on top is dominant, a point not lacking dimensions

revision desirable for both parties. Fixity is approximate, not rigid, after all. What?

may have tasted sweeter, but she believes she is genetically fat. Can you give me directions? Menace. A brilliant pollution

thighs, buttocks clenched around points of penetration. Move along the linear stream of white
terrible sense of power overcomes you and for a moment you understand Nietzsche, then you come down, headachy
take your finger off the trigger or you're lost. In the outer universe red marks a decrease in energy
And who thinks like that? and does this change the way we look at each other. It's enough to suggest

the familiar blinds us at every moment unless
flower in the tundra? Yes, it's lovely of course. Night freezes us here. For hours. Guarded by darkness seeping

across ages of extreme delight bring here to make him verbal is not the point
drained for the pages are overlapping despite all your efforts to keep them clean and white, and white
and contrary to appearance (Or is it reality?) white is hottest with the highest energy. Then blue. (Implications
if for now statements multiply. In letters are closer than by phone. If he were here, I'd be there, not

something calls me away or simply the loss of music or the other eight. When I think of him
through glass, knocking at the door. He is not careful. His sincerities are overweight,

though desire wish it so. What the world needs now it has always needed. Cruel mystery, inadequate miracle
is the color of absence and it will be a cloud between us “well-received” through the hours and days of our love —
for hair dye.) Holding on, holding on, holding on when you could let go. Down on your knees as if in prayer
here. It's a mark of freedom, inner freedom. That's where you claim your ^{grace}_{source} No, No. Too late. Fiasco

and his grandmother's ashes falling feathers over the Rio Grande Gorge and that night a voice entered him
the other is in the world. A grace in his being, in a world graced with his being. When the hour of dreams

brings us here as we are, not as more, though able to see it dream it want it so bad you can taste it smell it.

aspirine vitaminée tamponée—and every place has its own just so ^{persecuted}_{presented} just so and

beatitudes out of blue. Islamic style — head to prayer rug. Nothing foreign in this enterprise

Averted. Step by step along the edge of the crack, earth cracked here and white butterflies fly down into

a boy of 13 and he spoke a poem. Heart song in air here winding our way in words deep into the gorge.

was sold it came as a great relief. perhaps he will not arrive, not here or ever. Talking

Here it swelling sweetening the tongue. Never enough, never the honey and ambrosia we long for,
the line jams at the exit. Some other point has been reached in pain, despite pain which
just a different type of trout fishing, done on the knees with a short pole. He fishes — is he strong?
flowering sage, but a man parachutes in & has to be helicoptered out: no means of egress wingless as self-love

another descent. broken by hours sensation seems never to have been but for memory. the skin has forgotten
in the absence of morning. Three days to come then depart toward the next station Are these the last three hours

the line goes out beyond anything we can see, to what? a curve, a bend and then comes back on us again when even Epicurus took pains to alleviate with only modest success (de rigueur). It has to be dug out, rooted No. But his Dad was and that's enough for him. It's not the same, no heat to it. Admitted the love of quavering, in the blank space you remember other-lust is insurmountable without another. At the end is

Stand by for the shades to rise, whose skin can not obliterate the life scarred into its surface. Let of light. The body will not cooperate in the effort to hide: it bends, contracts, slides, swells, gapes, cries

finitude is reached it hates to end hence it turns and bends and the curve is where
out, seen to be believed, seen for what it is: Black Henbane
delight inside motion (mojo) She fat. Stood on an ordinary curbstone. Her facts make
the space to remember now is for making. walking the field admiring

scarred ones speak. Another tight bend must be rounded, how many seasons of fear?
leaks its truth. Snakeroot/white. Nightshade/black.

The point returns and you enter after a million entries and
Death Camas or Nux Vomica all conducive to soul-sleep the hour
denial of earthly presence absurd as belief in flat earth after
the timbre of crickets, the feisty buzz of grasshoppers

Do they cry one by one “J’Accuse! J’Accuse!” Then fall back
curiously coeval — coevil. A slight change

know the place and cry, 'Take it 'Take it and then frenzy subsides. What craft is this to practice, a ribbon
of the Sheep: 2-4 p.m. and summer. There remains there no matter how intimate one becomes
Copernicus, Newton, Galileo or at the hour of the Tiger/Autumn brings a knock at the door
depleted under each footfall. O approaches. Now is the blank time between hours of Snake and Sheep —

from speech. They withdraw, falling like this evening's twilight. The hour of the Tiger draws nearer. asleep or
sixth in a row rapid, rabid, rapt with moves. frenetic innocence. And then BAM! A gun empties its venom

spun velvet black or silken white will break against the sharpened teeth of definition. Take it: that and to care how, not claiming to know anything save there is no terminal point to what is, a way of No. too early for that to be, the hour of darkest dark, coldest cold. In truth it was 9:15 knowledge likewise partial and flows in the narrow eddies off the main body of water. We'll get a new view

awake ashes will settle into ink Spacious the rooms set aside

at the mirage of an enemy. Have any of us known that kind of love: Do any of us love? Secure in our boredom

frenzy out of mad attempts at logic. No verbs or adjectives alone can free us. Recognition of
going on: a form of continuation beyond what we know. Black of all, White of nothing Then the bird
and the second time asked and the second refusal. By the Law of Threes the next, if it comes, will be yes. At this
by and by. Those that remain: not you, not the others. In the meantime the browning sun

for pleasure. Ample time to enjoy them. Were there no gate within us keeping us back
Contractual restraints invoked. Is that the last dandelion summer fuzzy gold

this point the bend to go forward. Vine of poet/tender with tendrils
drunk on crab apples flies into a window we hadn't perceived until
point breath is shallow. Wait for it to deepen and slow. Shall I go or stay
in its sheer heat each ray eight years to reach

non consummatum est
to touch with sun-browned nipples

not stiff or regulated/not without measure. The linear curves too far
a cross-over has been achieved and we're off to the next
What if it's true: white is sweet, black is pungent. apples and oranges all are we
this afternoon. How does one give up or in, knowing

light touch, part for the whole suffices
kneeling down to it, not to pick it. And the day is changed



Patricia Pruitt is a poet whose work has been widely published in the United States and internationally. She lives in Turner's Falls, Massachusetts.

A selection of other books by the same author:

Construction Work: Boston, Longwood Press, 1991.

(in)Congruity: Paris, France, Busking Editions, 1991.

Octave: Cambridge, MA, Infinity Press, 1997.

Sessions I-IV: Jersey City, NJ, Jensen/Daniels, 1998.

Windows: Boston, Pressed Wafer, 2002

Cork: Turners Falls, MA, 2013.

As Translator:

Dix méditations sur quelques mots d'Antonin Artaud by Christopher Sawyer-Laumann. Translated by Patricia Pruitt, Alyscamps Press, Paris, France 2016.

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This is copy _____

